

Wasatch County Hospital will Participate in Grant

14 Mar 1985

SALT LAKE CITY--Wasatch County Hospital (WCH) will participate in a \$650,000 Robert Wood Johnson Foundation grant awarded to Intermountain Health Care, Inc. (IHC) to initiate programs for long-term care for the elderly, reports Wayne T. Terry, administrator of WCH.

IHC, manager of WCH, is receiving the grant in two phases over a four-year period and dividing the funds among eight IHC hospitals.

"Our purpose of initiating this program at WCH is to design a means to coordinate traditional physician, nursing and hospital care with home health services and community-based health care programs for the elderly in our service area," explains Terry. "This effort will reduce costly long-term care expenses for our elderly and will also provide more individualized programs for them."

"A Robert Wood Johnson task force, comprised of people in the WCH service area, advises the hospital of the particular needs of the elderly in our communities," he adds.

Members of this task force include:

- * Betty Biggler, RN, service coordinator of the Robert Wood Johnson grant for the WCH service area;

- * Janet Kelly, MD;

- * Reginald Tadd, Wasatch County commissioner;

- * Phil Wright, director of Wasatch County Health Department;

- * Stan Magleby, administrator of Heber Valley Care Center;

- * Elaine Murdock, citizen;

- * Pastor Thom Ernst, pastor of Heber Baptist Chapel;

- * Francis Harrison, citizen.

According to Teresa Van-Norman, regional administrator

for long-term care services for IHC Hospitals, Inc., there are three main objectives to administering the grant:

- * To establish a service at WCH to help the elderly find and effectively use existing services available to them in their communities;

- * To educate the elderly and their families on what local services are available to them; and

- * To determine what services for the elderly should be added to the WCH service area and then develop those services.

"The program will help the elderly in our communities maintain maximum independence while receiving the care they need," says Terry. "It should also eliminate unnecessary hospitalization or nursing home placement."

According to a study conducted by students at the Brigham

Young University, 10 percent of the WCH service area population was 65 or older in 1983. They estimate that this number is growing steadily at two and one-half percent annually. "This reinforces the importance of long-term care programs for the elderly in our community," says Terry.

"For years, WCH has been serving our aging population by providing beds within the hospital dedicated to those needing long-term care. These patients and our staff members who care for them have actually become like family. We want to continue providing this special kind of care to other elderly patients as they come to us. That's why," he concludes, "I'm especially thankful that we are able to participate in this program and intend to see that the community benefits to the fullest."

